MARVEL

309

ZDARSKY
BACHALO

RATED **T**

PETER PARKER: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN

TOWNSEND

PETER PARKER: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN

Hey. Hey! Yeah, I'm talking to you. As far as I know, nothing exists outside of us two disembodied, comic-book recapping voices. I think we can agree things have gotten out of control here, yes?

Hmmm, I'm not sure what you mean? Spider-Man just saved the world from destruction, and now he's back to New York City and it's biz-as-yooge! J. Jonah Jameson is doing his best to help, but ah-hoo-ho-ho-hoh man! It's HARD to teach an old dog new tricks, you know what I'm saying? He's still all, "you're a menace, go to the hospital to menace Sandman, who's also a menace--"

Stop. Just stop. Who is this cavalier performance for?

Then it's a thwippity-thwip away to the beach! See, Sandman's consciousness lives in one grain of sand--BLAM! And lately, he's been losing control of the rest of his body--POW! And also having these flashes where he experiences life in the far distant future, after the end of the Earth and everything he knows--CHOOM! And a strange voice has been telling him to just let go... Zing... And then Spider-Man kept Sandman company while...swish...he drifted away on the wind for the last time...

Look, you're right. I'm trying to keep up appearances, but...what did that other voice mean when it said "it's my turn"? I'm worried...and just...sad.

CRACKED HOURGLASS – PART TWO

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DON'T RESIST. IT WON'T HELP.

WHAT...WHAT'S *HAPPENING?* WHO *ARE* YOU? HOW ARE YOU IN MY--

CAN'T YOU FEEL IT?

I'M YOU.

I'M THE *FUTURE.* MY MEMORIES FLOWING IN ARE NOW *YOURS.*

REMEMBER YOUR *TOMORROW.* LIVE A LIFE THROUGH ME, WHILE YOU STILL CAN.

BUT YOU'RE-- YOU'RE *NOT* ME! THESE AREN'T *MY*--

NOW YOU KNOW *WHY* I'M HERE. WHY *YOUR* FORM HAS TO BE MINE.

BECAUSE THERE IS NO OTHER CHOICE.

YOU--YOU--
MENACE!

THERE'S THE JONAH I KNOW AND LOVE!

YOU LEFT ME OUT HERE AND HELPED THE SANDMAN ESCAPE?! MAYBE I WAS WRONG ABOUT YOU! MAYBE YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN IN LEAGUE WITH THESE--THESE VILLAINS!

HE'S DEAD, OKAY?! ARE YOU HAPPY?! I HELPED HIM LEAVE THE HOSPITAL SO HE COULD DIE THE WAY HE WANTED TO, NOT WAITING FOR--FOR COPS TO TRY AND TAKE HIM AWAY!

OH MY GOD...

...SHUT! UP!

FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE! JUST--

I KNOW YOU THINK MY LIFE, THIS ROLE, IS TO JUST BEAT UP SUPER VILLAINS, BUT IT CAN'T BE JUST THAT. IT'S--

I HAVE TO MAKE DECISIONS. ALL THE TIME. WHAT'S BEST, WHAT HELPS.

AND YEAH, THIS TIME IT WAS TO HELP ANOTHER HUMAN BEING FACE THEIR MORTALITY...AND...

...AND...

"OOOOH THE VILLAIN WAS DYING! HOW DO I KNOW? 'CAUSE HE TOLD ME SO!"

WHAT... HOW IS THIS...

SP-SPIDER-MAN...

DID YOU HONESTLY JUST *TRICK* ME INTO HELPING YOU--

I--I DIED. I REALLY...MY HUMAN BODY DIED, BUT I L-LIVED ON...

...AS SAND...

YOU *CHARLATAN!* YOU MAY BE ABLE TO *DUPE* THIS *MAN-CHILD*, BUT NOT *J. JONAH JAMESON!* NOW *TURN YOURSELF* IN BEFORE I--

WHAT IS *WRONG* WITH *YOU?!* JUST--

PLEASE J-JUST LISTEN...

I'M B-BEING CONTROLLED... BY MY FUTURE SELF...

...BUT HE'S NOT... HIS MEMORIES AREN'T M-MINE... IT DOESN'T MAKE...

I TOLD YOU NOT TO BOTHER RESISTING. I'M ALMOST FULLY HERE. FULLY *YOU.*

NO! LEAVE ME ALONE! YOU'RE NOT ME!

NO, I'M NOT.

NOT *YET.*

RRRAHHH!!!!

BUT I'M *GETTING* THERE.

...AHH, IF IT ISN'T MY *SAVIOR...*

...THE SPIDER-MAN.

K-THWAK

NFF!!!

...JUST NOT MY SPIDER-MAN.

WHAT--WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WHAT ARE YOU--

I ALMOST DIED, YOU KNOW. AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE...

...BUT YOU DON'T LIVE FOR BILLIONS OF YEARS WITHOUT LEARNING A FEW TRICKS...

GRAHH!!!

THRAK

...SUCH AS HAVING MY CONSCIOUSNESS TRAVEL THROUGH THE UNENDING GRAIN OF SAND THAT MAKES US WHO WE ARE...

BUT I COULDN'T TRAVEL TO MY PAST. TIME TRAVEL. PARADOXES.

NHHH... M-MY SANDMAN NEVER TALKED THIS MUCH...

I HAVEN'T SPOKEN A HUMAN LANGUAGE IN FOUR BILLION YEARS, FORGIVE ME.

HNF!

NONE OF THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOU, SPIDER-MAN...

...YOU OPENED THE DOOR... AND I'M ALMOST COMPLETELY THROUGH IT...

Y-YEAH...

I OPEN A LOT OF DOORS...

I'M A...

...REAL GENTLEMAN--

THWIP

NNNAHH!!!

OOOF!

"OPENED THE DOOR"?

WHAT DOES THAT EVEN M--

OH NO.

OH NO. THAT'S... I MUST HAVE--

HOW DO I--HOW DO I *FIX* THIS?! WHO DO I...

OH MANNNN...

TAK

JOHNNY STORM HERE, WHICH MEANS YOU'RE *VERY LUCKY*--

JOHNNY! IT'S *SPIDEY!* I NEED YOUR HELP! *SANDMAN* IS TEARING THROUGH *MIDTOWN!*

REALLY?

HUH. YEAH, SURE LOOKS THAT WAY.

SHOULD I *FLAME ON* AND SAVE YOU AND MILLIONS?

NO! JUST *LISTEN!*

SANDMAN'S BEING TAKEN OVER BY A *SANDMAN* FROM ANOTHER *UNIVERSE!* ONE THAT I OPENED A WAY TO WHEN I TRAVELED THROUGH THE *MULTIVERSE!**

THIS WAS *REED'S* SPECIALTY! I *KNOW* HE LEFT YOU AND *BEN* A WAY TO *TRAVEL* THE *MULTIVERSE!* HE MUST HAVE PREDICTED *THIS* AS WELL! THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO *SEAL* IT *OFF!*

THIS *EVIL SANDMAN* IS *ALMOST* FULLY THROUGH! YOU *NEED* TO FIND A WAY TO--

*SPECTACULAR #300-305! SPIDEY, YOU *FOOL!* -CHIP!

NGGAH!!!

YOU ARE NOTHING.

YOU ACCOMPLISH NOTHING.

YOU DON'T EVEN REALIZE WHAT A *BLIP* YOU ARE. TIME QUICKLY *ERASED* THE "*SPIDER-MAN*," AND ANYTHING HE *THOUGHT* HE ACCOMPLISHED.

THIS... THIS *ROAST* IS GETTING... A LITTLE... M-MEAN-SPIRITED...

H-HOLD ON, SPIDEY. I GOTCHA...

HNF!

WAIT... WHAT...

I CAN'T... DO THIS FOR... TOO MUCH LONGER...

I GOT...I'M WORKIN' ON A PLAN...JUST NEED MORE TIME...

I CAN'T... CAN'T CONTROL M--MY *SAND* FORM *AND* FIGHT HIS TAKEOVER AT TH-THE SAME TIME...

NF!

FALLING... APART...

...NEED TO FOCUS ON...

...STOPPING HIM FROM TAKING OVER...

WHAT CAN I DO?!

MY BODY... MY *HUMAN* BODY IS DEAD... BUT IT COULD *CONTROL* THE SAND...

I THINK... I THINK I CAN GIVE *CONTROL* OF THE SAND TO... TO ANOTHER BODY...

ANOTHER... ANOTHER BODY?

HO BOY

ALMOST... ALMOST...

...AND THEN... ANOTHER FIVE BILLION YEARS... OF THE ETERNAL SANDMAN...

NAH.

AHHH... I THOUGHT YOU'D LEFT. I THOUGHT YOU'D TAKEN MY ADVICE AND GIVEN UP...

I GOTTA ADMIT, YOU'VE FREAKED ME THE &$%# OUT, MAN.

BUT I CAN'T TELL WHAT FREAKS ME OUT MORE...

...THE FACT THAT I MIGHT JUST LIVE FOREVER...

...OR THAT I'D LIVE FOREVER AS A MASSIVE TOOL...

LUCKILY, YOU'LL NEVER KNOW...

AHH, YOU'VE REACHED THE "VILLAIN TALKING TO HIMSELF" STAGE...

...WHICH MEANS YOU'RE READY FOR THE "VILLAIN CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING OH GOD MY PLAN MY PLAN" PHASE...

WHAT HAVE YOU--

JUST BEEN HITTIN' THE BEACH, *BECOMING* THE BEACH, YOU KNOW--

KRPAF

...GETTING READY FOR THE HEAT WAVE...

GAH! WHY DIDN'T REED LEAVE, LIKE, INSTRUCTION MANUALS FOR HIS STUFF?!

I DON'T GET IT, KID. THA' MULTISECT THAT BIG BRAIN LEFT TAKES US THROUGH THA' MULTIVERSE, WHY WOULD IT HELP HERE?*

IT'S SIMPLE, MR. GRIMM...

*AS EVIDENCED IN ISSUES OF MARVEL 2-IN-ONE WRITTEN BY CHIP "SELF-REFERENTIAL" ZDARSKY! --CHIP!

...DR. RICHARDS KNEW THAT OPENING PATHS TO OTHER UNIVERSES ALSO REQUIRED CLOSING THEM OFF AFTER PASSING THROUGH, TO PREVENT THE KIND OF SITUATION THE DEEPLY HEROIC SPIDER-MAN NOW FINDS HIMSELF IN!

OH, FOR--

--GUY SAVES H.E.R.B.I.E.'S "LIFE" ONCE AND SUDDENLY HE'S "DEEPLY HEROIC"?!*

HE IS TRULY THE BEST OF US.

NOW PLEASE, MR. STORM, I NEED TO FOCUS...

*SPECTACULAR #306: "SPIDEY SAVES H.E.R.B.I.E." -CHIP!

...THE FATE OF THE WORLD DEPENDS ON IT!

I GUESS THEY DON'T HAVE *FISTFIGHTS* IN THE FAR FUTURE, SINCE--

--YOU'RE SO BAD AT--

HEY! DON'T BLOW AWAY YET! I'M JUST GETTING THE HANG OF FIGHTING DIRTY! GET IT?

FASCINATING. IT TOOK ME *DECADES* AFTER THE DEATH OF MY HUMAN BODY TO FIGURE OUT I COULD TRANSFER CONTROL OF *SAND*...

...BUT THERE ARE *OTHER* TRICKS...

HUFF!!!

SKAPAF

WOW... GLASS FIST...

KROOF

...I'LL HAVE TO LET IRON FIST KNOW...

...THERE'S SOME NEW COMPETITION FOR "FIST-THEMED CHARACTERS"...

BUT THAT'S ON TOMORROW'S TO-DO LIST...

GRNF!!!

RIGHT NOW...

...I JUST WANT TO SHOW YOU THE *SIGHTS!*

YOU'RE *WASTING* YOUR *TIME*, WHICH YOU HAVE PRECIOUS *LITTLE* OF *LEFT!* I'LL SOON--

WHAT ARE YOU--

NOW, *NORMALLY* I WOULDN'T *SUGGEST* SWIMMING IN THE *HUDSON*...

...BUT SINCE YOU'LL JUST *BE* HERE FOR A SHORT TIME...

KERSPLASH

YOU FOOL...

...DO YOU *HONESTLY* BELIEVE I MANAGED TO LIVE FOR *BILLIONS* OF YEARS AND *NOT* FIGURE OUT HOW TO *COEXIST* WITH *WATER?*

WELL, I WAS HOPING TH-- MFF!!!

ERK!

IT'S *OVER.*

AND SO ARE *YOU.* IT'S A PLEASURE TO WATCH YOU *DIE* A *SECOND* TIME...

FIRE FROM ABOOOOOVE!

CORRECTION: HANDSOME FIRE FROM ABOVE!

TAK TAK TAK TAK

NO... NO I NEED MORE TIME! I NEED--

TAK TAK TAK TAKOOM

...SPIDEY?

SPIDEY!

"SO...IT WORKED?

"THE RIFT WAS SEALED?

"DID WE

FSSHH

...DID WE *SAVE* HIM?

WE DON'T...THERE WASN'T...

NOBODY'S *SEEN* *SANDMAN.*

THOUGH I *STILL* SUSPECT HE DID *ALL THIS* TO GO ON THE *LAM*...

JONAH, PLEASE, NOT NOW...

I... *THANKS* FOR MAKING SURE THE DOCTORS DIDN'T...YOU KNOW...

TAKE THE *MASK* OFF? WELL, THERE ARE SOME PERKS TO BEING AN EX-*MAYOR* IN THIS TOWN...

BUT EVEN I HAVE MY LIMITS: THE *NURSES* WHO *DON'T* RECOGNIZE MY *POWER* AND *INFLUENCE* ARE TELLING US VISITING HOURS ARE *OVER*...

I'LL COME BY TOMORROW TO BRING YOU HOME.

JONAH, I *DON'T* NEED YOU TO--

HUSH! I'M YOUR *PARTNER!* IT'S WHAT WE *DO!*

HO BOY

I'LL SEE YA ON TUESDAY IF YOU'RE FEELING UP FOR IT.

YOU CAN COME *OUT* NOW.

HOW'D YA...?

I THINK JUST A...AN *ECHO* OF YOUR LITTLE "VULCAN SAND MELD"...

SORRY I DIDN'T SHOW EARLIER... I JUST DIDN'T...

WANT TO HEAR *J. JONAH JAMESON* YELL AT YOU FOR BEING A *MENACE?* TRUST ME, I *TOTALLY* GET IT.

ARE YOU...IS EVERYTHING...

NORMAL? I DON'T...I AIN'T *HUMAN* ANYMORE, THOUGH I GUESS I NEVER REALLY WAS...

IT'LL TAKE ME SOME GETTIN' USED TO...ESPECIALLY KNOWIN' WHAT'S COMIN'...

=NFF= YOU DON'T *KNOW* WHAT'S COMING! TRUST ME, I'VE SEEN ENOUGH "ALTERNATE FUTURES" TO KNOW--

YEAH, *BUT--*

I NEVER THOUGHT I COULD LIVE FOREVER...

IT'S... IT'S *SCARY,* MAN...

THINGS *MEAN* SOMETHING WHEN YOU CAN DIE.

BUT LIVIN' FOREVER...

"...WHAT KIND OF *LIFE* IS THAT?"

FAILURE.

BUT I DIDN'T JUST FAIL...THE *UNIVERSE* FAILED.

IT FAILED TO *END* ME.

I WILL LIVE FOREVER AFTER ALL...

...IN NOTHING.

MARVEL LEGACY

DON'T MISS

PETER PARKER: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #310

Variant cover by
CHIP ZDARSKY!

LET US KNOW HOW WE'RE DOING! Send e-mail to **SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM** (please mark "**OKAY TO PRINT**").

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